4 Pages on That Soviet Moon

Inside: Containment Is Dead, The Satellite Is the ICBM's Eye

I. F. Stone's Weekly

VOL. V, NO. 39 OCTOBER 14, 1957 WASHINGTON, D. C. 15 CENTS

A Terrifying Stranger Knocks at Heaven's Gate

With the launching of the first artificial moon into the skies, man stands at last on the threshold of the universe. *Outside* takes on a new meaning. There new worlds beckon a new Columbus. The Infinite, on which mystics brooded, may become the playground of the astronaut and man roam where God is supposed to have presided.

Like any other stranger, knocking at a new door, Man must nervously adjust his tie and give himself a quick once-over, hoping to make a good impression. The self-inventory is not reassuring. To a fresh eye at the outer world's window, the newcomer may seem a creature of terrifying habits.

Only the Excuses Change

Wherever man goes, he brings with him war. His poets glorify it. Each generation's healthiest youth is trained for it. Any difference within the human species is enough to serve as excuse for it. Religion, coloring, national jealousy, capitalist competition for markets, deviations of dogma among communists—the excuses vary, the behavior remains the same.

One may easily imagine the anxious debates of an interstellar conference called to consider the danger. What if men transplant their feuds, as Spaniards and Englishmen did after crossing the Atlantic? Theological gibberish was imposed by fire and sword on the bewildered Indian. What if the Russians reach the far side of the moon and demand that its creatures eschew bourgeois ideas? What if we Americans, suspicious of uncommitted neutrals, land atom-armed on Mars and insist that the inhabitants adopt free enterprise? The human race may seem a pest which has suddenly appeared out of one small planet, making unsafe the highways among the stars.

A Heterogeneous Horde

Were some flying saucer to land cosmic investigators for a closer look, they would be startled to find that mentally men live centuries apart. Here are men with modern instruments so fine they can plot the course of the most distant suns. Next door to them may live men who turn for guidance, in their daily newspapers, to horoscopes like those cast by Babylonian astrologers millennia earlier. Here walk men brooding on the new multi-dimensional geometries. Past them in the same streets walk others who cross themselves when they see a black cat. Some men seem the harbingers of a new race; others seem fresh from the cave. Little wonder that so heterogeneous a mass is swept from time to time by outbreaks of madness, from the St. Vitus dance of the Middle Ages to those furnaces into which some human beings shovelled several million others only yesterday. Ours may not seem a wholesome breed for stellar immigration.

A gleaming metal ball hurtling regularly around our planet may be the first signal of intelligent life on earth to observers elsewhere who could not see into the murky depths of our aerial ocean. They might be surprised to learn that the minds which have made such wonders possible nowhere rule the human societies of which they are a part. Whatever the ostensible form of the society, everywhere the cunning govern. Here the ruler may be a Tammany-style politician, there a Commissar. The finer minds everywhere are subordinate to the inferior.

The two contenders for mastery of the earth, the "communistic" Russians and the "capitalistic" Americans have this in common. Their rulers equally distrust the "intellectual." The intellectual, like a special breed in a hive, is well fed so long as he devotes himself to the tasks allotted to him by his masters: the fabrication of new weapons, the inculcation of ideas to keep the human herd submissive. But let him begin to speak his mind, and he gets into trouble. At the least he may find himself deprived of livelihood; at the worst, he may be imprisoned as "subversive" or "counter-revolutionary." The intellectual on both sides is prized and yet suspect, favored but subjected.

Mechanical Brains Preferred

It is symptomatic that the foremost mind of our time, the man who found the magic formula that unlocked the atom, was exiled from his German homeland as racially inferior, and regarded in America, though with tolerance because of his greatness, as more than a little subversive, while in the Soviet Union his theory of relativity was taboo as "bourgeois." The rulers everywhere prefer mechanical brains.

Objectively speaking, it would probably be better for the universe if man remained earthbound. In the wake of the first satellite, we give no sign of closing ranks and facing outward as a united species. There is no sudden sense of how petty has become all that once divided us. There is little reverent wonder for the adventures which could lie ahead. Instead there is intensified fear, and a demand to step up preparations for the next war, which must now be fought in the upper skies as well. Missile stocks are up. Nothing has changed but the magnitude of our potential for mass murder.

As the sky fills with satellites and the sky platforms are manned and armed, will Americans and Russians shoot it out in the wild yonder, destroying each other and the world with them? It might be better, after all, if space *were* left to a newer species, bred to live in peace and to take joy in diversity. Our first reactions, like all our past, show how unfit men are for the heavens. We would only stain red the Milky Way.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Military on Both Sides Need Artificial Moons to Aim the ICBM Precisely Enough

The Secret of All That Enthusiasm About the Geophysical Year

When the Russians last August announced that they had fired off an intercontinental ballistic missile, a tantalizing observation was made by the Military Correspondent of the London *Times*. He pointed out (Aug. 28) that an ICBM with a 10-megaton thermonuclear warhead would cause total or severe damage within a radius of 7 miles. "To guarantee the destruction of an airfield," he wrote, "the missile would have to land within 7 miles of it. But with a missile travelling 5,000 miles, he went on to say "an error of less than one-tenth of a degree in the aiming of it would subtend an error of 7 miles at the target." A successful shot by intercontinental missile would require maps far more exact than those we now possess. "It may be doubted," he said significantly, "whether anyone knows with certainty precisely where Moscow and New York lie in relation to each other."

Despite the talk on both sides about pure science, the secret of why the military of the U. S. and the U. S. S. R. are so interested in the Geophysical Year and in an artificial satellite is because they must have far more precise maps if they are to use the ICBM effectively.

With that London *Times* story as a background, it is interesting to read the testimony taken by the House Appropriations Committee earlier this year on the earth satellite program during its hearings on the 1958 Defense Dept. Budget. (This begins at page 881 of Part 1). Dr. John P. Hagen, director of Project Vanguard, the code name for this program, did his best to create the impression that the satellite program was of no particular military importance. But he did say it would provide a much more exact knowledge than map-makers now have.

The satellite, Dr. Hagen explained, would be fairly close to earth, "and we will know its velocity to a high degree of precision. If we then measure the time it passes over two different points, we can get the linear distance between those points." Where there could be no actual surveying, he went on, as between Hawaii and the West Coast "we really do not know the precise distance. There is no good way presently to measure over water distances because of the deflection of the vertical. That is another kind of thing that will come out of the satellite experiment if and when it is successful."

An Associated Press dispatch from Paris on October 7 quoted a General Pierre Gallois along the same lines. "For example," he was quoted as saying, "everybody knows the Dniepr dam. But Soviet maps are very imprecise. To plot the topography precisely it would have been necessary to go there with a sextant and plot its coordinates. To direct an intercontinental bomb with precision, the photos and the maps supplied by the satellite will be of considerable utility."

The race for the satellite is a race to give the new ultimate weapon, the ICBM, the precise maps it requires.

We'll Blow 'Em to Bits— If They'll Just Wait Awhile

Mr. [Robert L. F.] SIKES [D. Fla.] The story persists that a threat by the Russians that they might use their guided missile capabilities against France and Britain had much to do with the decision of those countries to withdraw from the Suez. We presumably know something about the location of those sites. If they are within range of the capitals of Europe, would they also be within range of guided missiles launched by our forces at sea?

Admiral [Arleigh A.] BURKE [Chief of Naval Operations]. Yes, sir, they would be within range.

Mr. SIKES. What principal targets in Europe or Asia could not now be reached by the A-3-D [intermediate missile]?

Admiral BURKE. Well, there are very few, sir. Right in the very center there is a small area which could not be reached. However, as we would start our attack well out at sea and we would not try to get into the center of Russia at the start. We would start well out at sea where they would have the maximum amount of trouble and we would have the least amount of opposition and strike the targets which are nearest the sea and work them over until we get complete superiority and then we would work closer in to the beach. . . .

Mr. SIKES. Are the intermediate range missiles now operational or still in test stage?

Admiral BURKE. They are all in test stage.

—House Approp. Com. Hearings on the 1958 Defense Budget, Pt. 1, p. 647.

If Only the Russians Hadn't Send Those German Scientists Home

Mr. [Jamie L.] WHITTEN [D. Miss.] Dr. Von Braun, you said, I believe, that the Russians had taken many eminent scientists from Germany and that it was your information after utilizing their services that in most instances they had had the plans and specifications and various other things that would show what they were doing written first in German and translated and signed by Russian scientists as though they were originated by certain Russian scientists. Did I understand you correctly?

Dr. [Werner] VON BRAUN, [Director of Development Operations, Division of the Army Ballistic Missile Agency, the man who was in charge of developing the V-2 for Hitler]. Yes, sir.

Mr. WHITTEN. I believe you further said according to your best information, that the Russians had larger missiles of a more obsolescent nature, whereas we had probably smaller weapons with more modern design. Now is it your opinion that practically all of the German scientists have now returned from Russia or are no longer occupied or kept busy in this program in Russia, the relatively few still in Russia?

Dr. VON BRAUN. Yes, relatively few, and I believe their contribution to the Soviet guided missile progress should not be overestimated. I believe that the Russians more or less familiarized themselves with the V-2 and had these German engineers and scientists make a few proposals and then sent them home. But whatever the Russians have now is probably grown on Russian soil rather than designed by German engineers. . . .

Mr. WHITTEN. Is that now why their missiles are becoming more obsolescent as compared with a country where we still have you folks here, and are glad to have you here, and utilize your capacity?

Dr. VON BRAUN. Yes, sir.

—House Appropriations Committee, Dept. of Defense Appropriations for 1958, Part 2, Pps. 1513-14-16.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

As Usual, They're Not Surprised—Washington's Stock Reaction

But Containment Has Crumbled and the Cold War Policy Is Bankrupt

I've been covering Washington for almost 20 years and invariably when something unexpected happens the spokesmen for the government—apparently unable to think of anything else—say they're not surprised. I can remember the State Department spokesman that sunny December Sunday not being surprised by Pearl Harbor. Jim Hagerty made the same lame announcement at the news of the Soviet satellite: Eisenhower wasn't surprised. I never have been able to figure out just what not being surprised is supposed to prove. When people entirely lose their capacity for surprise, they're dead. A mummy is immune to surprise.

Even knowing these people here as I do, however, I was myself a little surprised that the President, meeting the press just before our own press time, had nothing new to offer, not an intimation of some new thinking or departure. The reaction here illuminates the bankruptcy of Washington, not because the Soviets "got there first"—our own satellites will soon be up there, too—but because there is so little evidence of any willingness to assess, and to adjust to, the new technological realities. These were apparent before the satellite; the Soviet moon has merely put them into the headlines.

Tough Assignment

"4. Play your news in such a way that the public will not interpret this development as an indication of Soviet superiority in science."

—Instructions issued to the U. S. Information Agency on how to handle news of the satellite.

Overnight the cornerstones of American postwar policy have crumbled. Containment is dead; the ring of bases around the Soviet Union are all vulnerable to intermediate missiles; the Strategic Air Command with all its hot air press agentry and fierce-faced Generals is now, aerially speaking, horse-and-buggy era. These huge subsonic bombers are much too slow not only for modern missile defenses but for supersonic jet fighters.

All the cliches which went with reliance on these obsolete monsters and the "situations of strength" they were supposed to embody have evaporated, though neither the President nor the Secretary of State seems prepared to face up to it. "Aerial inspection"? The Russians will soon be doing it with satellites. Political conditions: the reunification of Germany on Western terms as a condition for an arms agreement? Germany, the central point in Dulles's thinking has been bypassed geographically and technologically.

Nothing Like A First Rate Intelligence Service

"Effective as communism has been in establishing control of two powerful nations and imposing its will on a number of satellite countries, it is beginning to encounter difficulties in coping with the complex industrial and technological problems of today."

—Allen W. Dulles, director of the Central Intelligence Agency, speaking to the Advertising Council, September 19, 1957.

Worst of all, much more serious than the Russian victory in rocket technology, which may be only temporary, is the damage being done the United States by our obdurate unwillingness to negotiate. The reluctance to see Zhukov is more than a social blunder. The impression spreads that we are unwilling to try to find a way out of the impasse which faces mankind. This springs from the simple fact that the military bureaucracy here fears more than anything else any relaxation of tension.

It is because the military here do not want an agreement that they would rather see the defense budget cut unilaterally than to have those reductions used as bargaining points in a negotiation. It is because the military here do not want an agreement that we have wrapped up our disarmament proposal in a package so impossibly complex that the Pentagon could find ways to block it even if the Kremlin suddenly accepted.

The Russians say they want peace. Not all their actions nor all their past support what they say: it is only a year since the Hungarian revolt was smashed, and only a few weeks since they began a new foray in the Middle East. But our good faith as well as theirs is at stake. To reject all proposals to talk is to put ourselves in the wrong.

The best guess here at the moment, however, is that the result of the satellite will not be a fresh start toward the peace which is now so urgent but the cheap and easy drift into a greater arms race than ever, with the Democratic opposition making capital of popular anxiety and alarm.

It's not just as seen from the stratosphere—even here on the ground, our political leadership looks pitifully small.

How Completely Congress Was Misinformed on Russian Missiles

Mr. [Robert L. F.] SIKES (D. Fla.). How do we determine the progress the Soviets are making in the weapons you referred to?

Dr. [Clifford C.] FURNAS [Assistant Secretary of Defense for research and development]. I think in order to get the rather complete and authentic story on that you would need a briefing from the Central Intelligence Agency, which I presume you have. . . . Each of the military departments has its own intelligence activities, too. I can say we get them from all three. . . .

Mr. SIKES. I believe Senator Symington indicated last night on one of the panel programs that the Russians are ahead of us in intercontinental ballistic missile development, and there has been feeling for some time that they were ahead of us in the development of the IRBM [Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile]. I know that is controversial. What does your Department think?

Dr. FURNAS. From the evidence I have seen from any of the intelligence sources, I can certainly state that I am sure we are well ahead of the Russians in this ballistic missile field.

Mr. SIKES. Both?

Dr. FURNAS. Yes; IRBM and ICBM.

—Dept. of Defense Budget for 1958, House Appropriations Committee Hearings, Pt. 1, pps. 342-3.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It Means Plain Speaking in Polish, and Krushchev Still Fears It

The Really Ultimate Weapon Still Seems to be *Po Prostu*

The encouraging event of the week was the Polish student demonstrations against the closing of their organ, *Po Prostu,* which means in Polish "plain speaking" The Soviet satellite is a healthy rebuke to our own military and diplomatic windbags; the Russians remain, as they were in the Nineteenth century, one of the great peoples of the world in their potential for genius. But the men who run the Soviet Union are not the same men who made the satellite; Krushchev is no Einstein and Zhukov is no Lobachevski. Nor is the satellite proof of the superiority of socialism. Supremacy in military technology was not Marx's vision or Lenin's. A dictatorship in full control of a great nation's resources, commanding a people accustomed to a very low standard of living, can divert manpower, brainpower and materials to military technology on a huge scale.

Though They All Suffered Under Stalin

But I saw enough in Eastern Europe last year to convince me that its intellectuals want more than anything else freedom of expression. Events later in the year in Warsaw and Budapest, demonstrated again that, for all their power, this freedom, this greatest of all explosives, is what the Russian rulers and the Communist dictators fear everywhere.

Zhukov suffered from Stalin's rule. Krushchev says he trembled under it. Tito was almost destroyed by it. Gomulka went to prison under it. Now in power themselves they cannot or will not tackle the hard job of reforming their regimes from within so that this cannot happen again.

No one, they say, dared speak out under Stalin. Who dares speak out under Krushchev? Like Stalin, he has begun to lecture the writers and artists on their duties; he, too, aspires to be the universal genius. Under Tito, Djilas goes back to jail for a longer term because he wrote a book, and in Poland *Po Prostu* is banned by Gomulka. How these masters of all the latest weapons fear the printed word! The most dangerous of all inventions is still Gutenberg's.

One of the main reasons for the struggle to establish a real peace in the world is that in peace those forces in the East which want to find a way toward freedom will have a chance to do so. War alarms strengthen thought control on both sides. Relaxation of tension is the path to liberation of the mind everywhere. But a special target for thoughtful people must be ultimately a fundamental revision of Communist thinking. A vulgarized, oversimplified philosophy of simple blacks and whites (*which is which* dependent always on a Politbureau's fiat) buttresses there the universal antipathy of men in power to any criticism of themselves.

So we end this week's letter on a simple affirmation of faith. The Russians have themselves a shiny new weapon, but the *Po Prostu* demonstrations show we have an older and better one—when we wake up to it—in Jefferson.

A Footnote from Germany

Bonn, Oct. 2—The 18 West German scientists who signed the Gottingen manifesto early this year have reaffirmed their opposition to nuclear weapons. At a meeting in Heidelberg, Professor Gerlach, of Munich, said that they had refused to take part in the public debate that arose out of their declaration because of the election, but they still adhered without reservation to their conviction. They would later reply to objective argument individually and jointly.

The declaration, which appeared on April 12, was at first believed to have awakened a latent and widespread longing for neutrality, which was sufficient to alarm the Government. Dr. Adenauer intervened, and two scientists recanted, professing to accept the official view that defense against nuclear attack was possible. The others appeared satisfied with assurances that no nuclear weapons would be made in west Germany.

Now it seems that the scientists have only been biding their time, and have closed their ranks. The Government has yet to make up its mind about equipping the Bundeswehr with nuclear weapons, and the scientists may be successful in raising the decision above a political level. Although their reputations are sufficient to give the Opposition, mainly the Social Democrats, strong moral, as well as expert, support, the party failed to make nuclear armaments an election issue.

—The Times (London) Oct. 3

Let Us Send A Free Sample Copy of This Issue to A Friend

I. F. Stone's Weekly, 5618 Nebraska Ave., N. W. Washington 15, D. C.

Please renew (or enter) my sub for the enclosed $5:*

Name .....

Street .....

City .....**Zone**.....**State**.....

Enter gift sub for $2 (6 mos.) or $4 (1 yr.) additional: 10/14/57

(To) Name .....

Street .....

City .....**Zone**.....**State**.....

Shall we send gift announcement? Yes ☐ No ☐

I. F. Stone's Weekly
5618 Nebraska Ave., N. W.
Washington 15, D. C.

NEWSPAPER

Entered as Second Class Mail Matter Washington, D. C. Post Office

I. F. Stone's Weekly. Entered as Second Class Matter at Washington, D. C., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Post-dated Mondays but published every Thursday except the last two Thursdays of August and December at 561 Nebraska Ave., N. W., Washington 15, D. C. An independent weekly published and edited by I. F. Stone; Circulation Manager, Esther M. Stone. Subscription: $5 in th U. S.; $6 in Canada; $10 elsewhere. Air Mail rates: $15 to Europe; $20 to Israel, Asia and Africa.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED